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(71)出願人 391012316

東京工業大学長

東京都目黒区大岡山2丁目12番1号

(72)発明者 伊賀 健一

東京都町田市つくじ野2-33-10

(72)発明者 馬場 俊彦

神奈川県相模原市東林間4-8-2 ヒロ
ロイヤルハイツ東林間202号

(72)発明者 佐々木 彩子

東京都杉並区荻窪5-21-26 ライオズ
マンション荻窪第3-702号

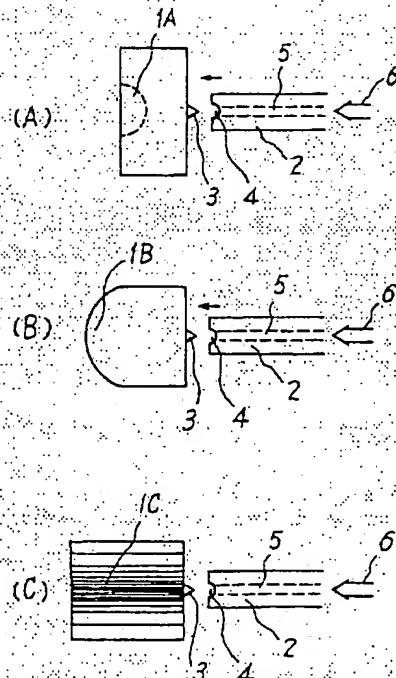
(74)代理人 弁理士 杉村 晓秀 (外5名)

(54)【発明の名称】無調整光コネクタ

(57)【要約】

【目的】 本発明は発光素子、受光素子、光伝送路などを接続するための無調整光コネクタの提供を目的とし、光ファイバどうしを接続する光コネクタ、半導体レーザや光回路と光ファイバの結合モジュールなど、あらゆる光モジュール、微小な個別光素子と光導波路基板の間の光結合が必要な光プリント基板、ハイブリッド光集積回路、光演算回路などに利用可能。

【構成】 レンズの焦点位置又は光導波路端面のコアの部分に自動的に突起又は窪みを形成させ、コアに窪み又は突起を形成した光ファイバ端面と無調整で光結合して構成したことを特徴とする無調整光コネクタ。



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(2)

特開平5-333232

2

用を可能にした無調整光コネクタに関するものである。

【0005】本発明の無調整光コネクタは、レンズの集光位置、光導波路や光ファイバのコア、および他の微小光学素子の光パワーが集まっている箇所に光によって自動的に数ミクロンの大きさの突起や窪み、すなわち微小な光コネクタを形成させ、これらを接続させることによって無調整で光結合を可能にする無調整光コネクタである。ただし、このような微小コネクタをそれだけで手作業で接続させるのはむずかしいので、光ファイバや光部品を光結合位置であるコネクタ付近まで誘導するガイド機構、例えば、溝や孔などを備えていると効果的であり、必要である。

【0006】

【実施例】本発明の無調整光コネクタの実施例の図について説明する。図1 (A) ~ (C) は平板マイクロレンズ1A、凸面レンズ1B、ロッドレンズ1Cなどの微小レンズ1と光ファイバ2との結合例である。本発明においては、図1に示すようにレンズ基板1上に突起3を、光ファイバ2に窪み4を形成した例を示し、レンズ基板1上の突起3または窪み4は焦点位置に形成され、一方、光ファイバのコアは窪んでいるか、または突き出でている構成する。レンズ基板1と光ファイバ2とを接続すれば、光ファイバ2から出射された光はレンズ1によって自動的にコリメート光へと変換される。図2

(A), (B) に示すように、これらのレンズ1と光ファイバ2がアレイ状に多数あるときも本発明の光コネクタは同じように適用できる。このようなレンズやレンズアレイに、光ファイバ2を誘導するガイド機構を備えた場合を図3に示す。ガイド機構としては、レンズ基板1上に機械的あるいは化学的手法で直接十字状溝7 (図3 (A)) や孔8 (図3 (B)) を刻んだもの、シリコン基板などの上に孔9 (図3 (C)) や溝10 (図3 (D)) を形成し、レンズ基板1上に設置するものなどが考えられる。また、光ファイバ2, 2どうしの結合、光導波路と光ファイバとの光結合にも適用した例を図4, 図5に示す。

【0007】図4においては、光ファイバ2Aの一端に突起3を、またこれと突き合せる他方の光ファイバ2Bに窪み4を設けて、光ファイバ2A, 2Bを突き合せ結合すると、一方の光ファイバ2Aの突起3と他方の光ファイバ2Bの一端窪み4とが対面した状態で光結合ができる。

【0008】図5は光ファイバと光導波路とを結合する例を示すもので、光導波路11に複数のコア12を設け、この複数のコア12付近にそれぞれ光ファイバ2をガイドするためのガイド機構13を光導波路11の一端に設け、このガイド機構13の適当箇所に波形又は矩形状の溝13Aを形成し、この溝13Aの部分に一端に窪み4をもつ複数の光ファイバ2を配置し、複数の光ファイバ2をこの溝13Aにガイドさせて水平移動させ、光導波路11のコア12の

【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】レンズの焦点位置又は光導波路端面のコアの部分に自動的に突起又は窪みを形成させ、コアに窪み又は突起を形成した光ファイバ端面と無調整で光結合して構成したことを特徴とする無調整光コネクタ。

【請求項2】光ファイバと光結合するレンズ基板又は光導波路は光ファイバをコネクタ付近まで誘導するガイド溝を具備している請求項1記載の無調整光コネクタ。

【請求項3】微小レンズを多数アレイ状に連設したレンズアレイと、これに光結合する光ファイバを多数アレイ状に連設した光ファイバアレイとをその突合せ端面に突起と窪みとを対向して設け、これを無調整で光結合した請求項1記載の無調整光コネクタ。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【産業上の利用分野】本発明は発光素子、受光素子、光伝送路など様々な光素子を接続するための無調整光コネクタに関するものである。本発明の産業上の利用分野は、光ファイバどうしを接続する光コネクタ、半導体レーザや光回路と光ファイバの結合モジュールなど、あらゆる光モジュール、微小な個別光素子と光導波路基板の間の光結合が必要な光プリント基板、ハイブリッド光集積回路、光演算回路などである。

【0002】

【従来の技術】光ファイバ通信は大容量、高速などの優れた特徴をもち、現代の情報化社会を支える基盤技術である。これまで主に電話線の幹線系や中継系へ導入されてきたが、近い将来の光LANや加入者系への導入が考えられ、取り扱う情報量も飛躍的に増大するものと考えられる。これら次世代光通信では、使用される伝送システムの数が桁違いに多くなるため、高性能を維持しつつ大量生産と低価格を実現する必要がある。光伝送システムは、多くの光伝送回路や光素子で構成されており、これら素子間の高効率光結合はシステムを構築する上で不可欠な技術である。

【0003】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】しかしながら現状では、特に素子と素子の間、および光ファイバと光素子の間の光結合を高効率に行うために、素子の位置を精密調整する必要がある。しかしこれには膨大な人手と手間が必要で、システムの大量、安価供給への妨げとなっている。さらに近年の情報量の増加にともない、数10から100本以上の光ファイバを用いた並列光伝送が実用化されつつある。しかし、並列光システム構築にいたってはアレイ状の光素子どうしを一括接続しなければならないので、この問題はいよいよ深刻となる。

【0004】

【課題を解決するための手段】本発明は、高効率に光結合を行うために必要となる精密な位置調整を不要、または簡単にし、しかも並列光結合など複雑な光結合にも適

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(3) 特開平5-333232

3 突起3と光ファイバ2のコア14の窪み4とを衝き合せ結合する。

【0009】ガイド溝として十字状溝7をもった平板マイクロレンズ1Aと光ファイバ2のコネクタの製作法について実施の一例を述べる。平板マイクロレンズ1Aの基板1の裏面にダイシングソーなど機械鋸15で、図6(A), (B)に示すように焦点面の深さまで十字に溝16を形成する。この場合、溝16の交差部分が光ファイバ2のガイド溝17に相当する。

【0010】光コネクタの突起3は感光性ポリイミドや光硬化性樹脂で形成する。形成手段としては、これらの感光性樹脂をガイド溝17の底面に薄く塗布し、平板マイクロレンズ1Aのレンズ面側からコリメートされたコヒーレント光で露光する。これにより図7(A)～(C)に示すように焦点位置の樹脂のみが自動的に露光されて、硬化し、現像処理の後に、突起が形成される。ただし、これらの樹脂は光通信に用いる光の波長帯で光吸収が小さいことが必要である。一方、光ファイバの窪みは、沸化水素酸系等化学エッティングを用いて形成する。このエッティングでは、エッティング速度が光ファイバ内のドーバント濃度に依存することが一般に知られており、光ファイバを単にエッティング剤19に浸漬することにより図8(A), (B)に示すようにコア5の位置のみを窪ませることが簡単にできる。以上の過程により製作されたガイド溝17に、コアに窪みをもつ光ファイバ2を挿入する。この際、付加的な光ファイバ2の精密位置調整はいっさい行わないが、突起3と窪み4がスムーズに結合するために、小さな振動を光ファイバ2に与えると効果的である。さらに硬化性樹脂18などで図9(A), (B), (C)に示すように全体を固定する。この樹脂18に、平板マイクロレンズ基板1や突起3、光ファイバのコア5などと近い屈折率をもつ透明な材料を選べば、溝16や突起3、窪み4を形成する際に生じる表面の細かい凹凸による光散乱を無視できる程度にまで小さくすることができる。

【0011】ここでは樹脂の露光にコリメート光を用いる例について述べたが、光ファイバ2や光導波路11内を伝搬する光を用いれば、これらのコアの位置に突起を製作することもできる。

【0012】

【作用】突起3と窪み4から構成される微小な光コネクタを、光ファイバ2のコア5や光素子の集光位置に形成し、これらを接続することで、高精度でかつ複雑な調整が不要な光結合が可能となる。

【0013】本発明の無調整光コネクタを用いることにより、レンズ1や光導波路11などの素子と光ファイバ2との光結合が容易に、しかも高精度に行える。本発明は並列光結合に関してても応用が可能である。この光コネクタを光ファイバ接続コネクタや半導体レーザと光ファイバの結合モジュール、あるいは光プリント基板に適用し

た例を図10(A)～(C)に示す。

【0014】図10(A)はコリメートレンズ22を2枚貼り合せ、その両側面の光軸位置に突起3を設け、この突起3と嵌り合される窪み4をもつた光ファイバ2、2を両側より結合して無調整光コネクタを構成した例を示す。

【0015】図10(B)は平板マイクロレンズ1Aの一側の光軸位置に突起3を設け、これと結合する窪み4をもつた光ファイバ2とを結合し、集光レンズ20の他側にアイソレータ21を介してコリメート用レンズ22および半導体レーザ23を結合した状態を示すものである。これにより本発明の無調整光コネクタは光ファイバ接続と半導体レーザとの結合モジュールにも適用できる。

【0016】図10(c)は本発明の無調整光コネクタを光プリント基板に適用した例を示す。光プリント基板25の中の導波路コア12の中を伝搬する光6の出射位置に突起3を設け、この突起3は窪み4をもつロッドレンズ24と結合する。これにより出射光はコリメート光に変換され、ロッドレンズ24の上に置かれた光コンポーネント26へ入射できる。

【0017】図11に光ファイバ3本を接続した例を示し、実際に本発明が実施可能であることを示したものである。この図はコリメート光を様々な角度で平板マイクロレンズ1Aに入射したときの光ファイバ2への結合損失を評価したもので、各ファイバ2からの出力のはらつきは5dB以下、過剰損失10dBという良好な結果を得た。

【0018】

【発明の効果】本発明の突起と窪みを結合したものから構成される微小な光コネクタを光ファイバのコアや光素子の集光位置に自動的に形成した無調整光コネクタを用いることにより、レンズや光導波路などの素子と光ファイバとの光結合が容易に、しかも高精度に行えると共に、並列光結合にも応用が可能である工業上大なる利点がある。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】図1(A), (B), (C)はそれぞれ平板マイクロレンズ、凸面レンズおよびロッドレンズ等の微小光レンズと光ファイバの結合に本発明の光コネクタを適用した実施の一例を示す説明図である。

【図2】図2(A), (B)は平板マイクロレンズおよび凸面レンズなどの微小レンズアレイと光ファイバアレイとの結合状態を示す説明図である。

【図3】図3(A), (B), (C), (D)は光ファイバを本発明の光コネクタ近くまで誘導するガイド機構を附加した実施例を示す説明図である。図3(A), (B)はレンズ基板に直接溝や孔を刻み込んだ例を示す。図3(C), (D)はシリコン基板などに溝や孔を形成し、レンズ基板と貼り合せた例を示す。

【図4】図4は光ファイバ同志の結合の例を示す説明図

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特開平5-333232

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である。

【図5】図5 (A), (B) は光ファイバと光導波路の結合の一例を示す正面図および側面図である。

【図6】図6 (A) は平板マイクロレンズ基板の裏面にダイシングソー(電動鋸)で十字にガイド溝を刻む工程の概念図である。図6 (B) は同製作した溝の斜視図である。

【図7】図7 (A) はレンズ基板の裏面に光硬化性樹脂で突起を形成するための露光法と形成された突起を示す概念図である。図7 (B) はレンズ基板の縦断面図である。図7 (C) は同突起の拡大写真図である。

【図8】図8 (A) は光ファイバ端面のコアの位置に窪みを形成する概念図である。図8 (B) は製作したファイバとコアの窪みの写真図である。

【図9】図9 (A) は本発明の無調整光コネクタの接合部を示す断面図である。図9 (B) は同接合部を硬化性樹脂で固定した状態を示す断面図である。図9 (C) は図9 (A) の接合部の顕微鏡による拡大断面図である。

【図10】図10 (A) は本発明の無調整光コネクタの構成の一例を示す概念図である。図10 (B) は本発明の無調整光コネクタのその他の実施の一例を示す概念図である。図10 (C) は本発明の無調整光コネクタを光プリント基板に適用した実施例の説明図である。

【図11】図11は本発明の無調整光コネクタに3本の光ファイバを接続した場合の各ファイバ毎の挿入損失特性曲線図である。

【符号の説明】

1. レンズ基板

1 A. 平板マイクロレンズ

1 B. 凸面レンズ

1 C. ロッドレンズ

2. 光ファイバ

3. 突起

4. 窪み

5. コア

6. 導波光

7. 十字状溝

8. 内孔状ガイド孔

10. 9. ガイド孔

10. 10. V字型ガイド溝

11. 光導波路

12. コア

13. ガイド機構

13 A. 溝

14. コア

15. ダイシングソー

16. 溝

17. 十字状ガイド溝

20. 18. 感光性ポリイミド又は硬化性樹脂

19. エッチング剤

20. 集光レンズ

21. アイソレータ

22. コリメート用レンズ

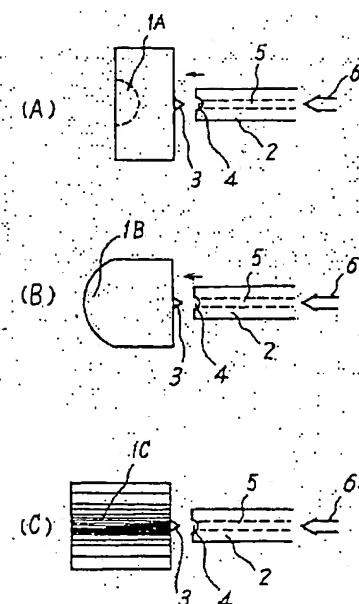
23. 半導体レーザ

24. ロッドレンズなどのコリメートレンズ

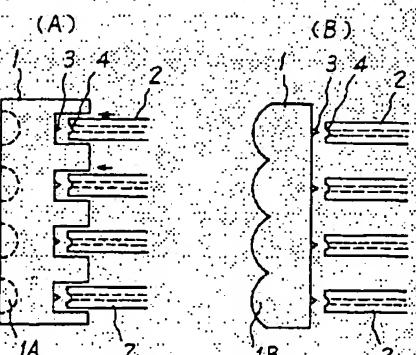
25. 光プリント基板

26. 光コンポーネント

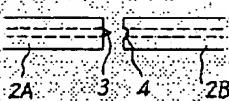
【図1】



【図2】



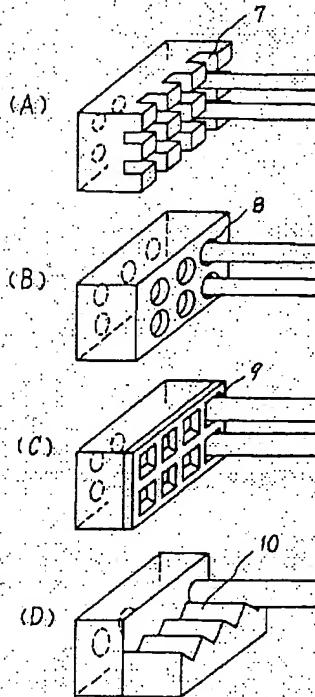
【図4】



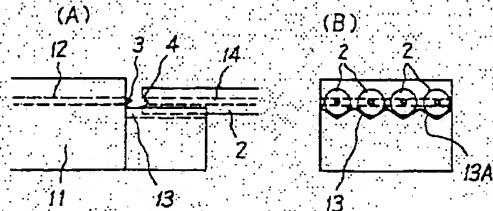
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特開平5-333232

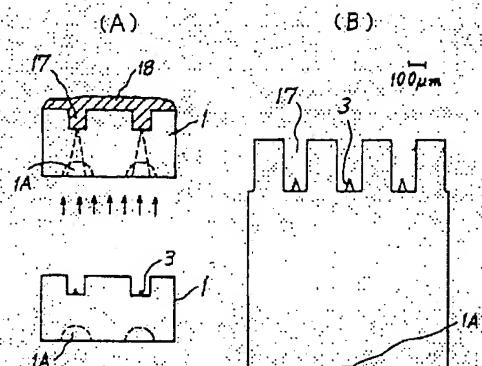
〔图3〕



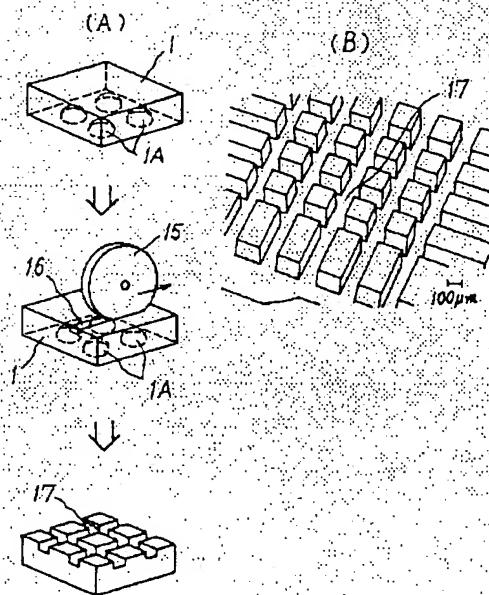
〔図5〕



〔图7〕



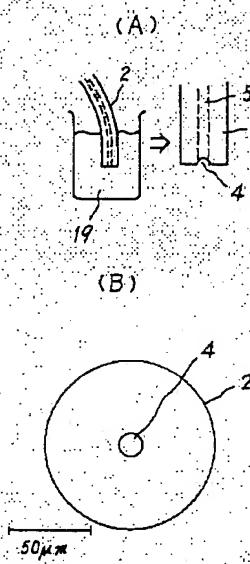
[图 6.]



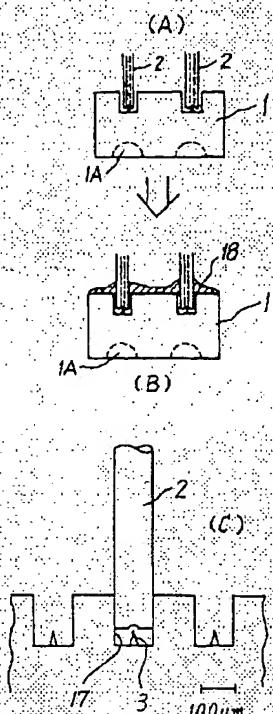
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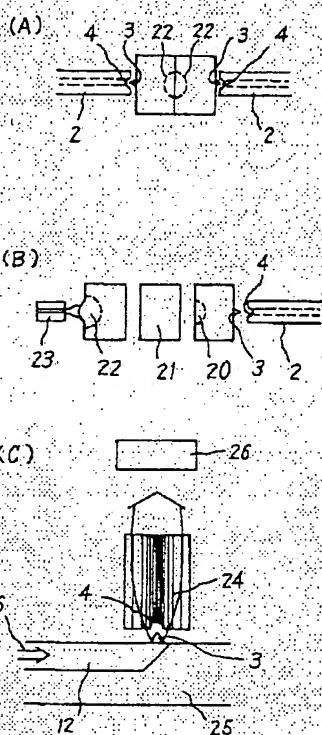
【図8】



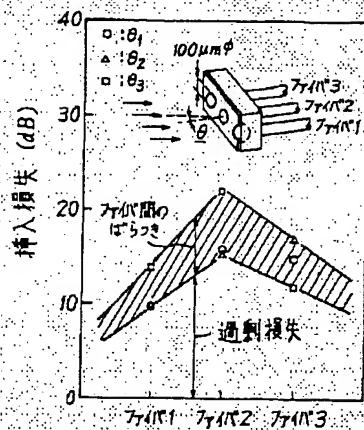
【図9】



【図10】



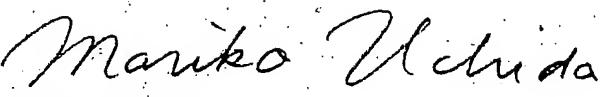
【図11】



Date: March 23, 2004

Declaration

I, Mariko Uchida, a translator of Fukuyama Sangyo Honyaku Center, Ltd. of 16-3, 2-chome, Nogami-cho, Fukuyama, Japan, do solemnly and sincerely declare that I understand well both the Japanese and English languages and that the attached document in English is a full and faithful translation, of the copy of Japanese Unexamined Patent No. Hei-5-333232 laid open on December 17, 1993.



Mariko Uchida

Mariko Uchida

Fukuyama Sangyo Honyaku Center, Ltd.

NON-ADJUSTMENT OPTICAL CONNECTOR

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Inventor: Kenichi IGA

Toshihiko BABA

Ayako SASAKI

Applicant: Chancellor of Tokyo Institute of Technology

Patent attorney: Akihide SUGIMURA, et al.

SPECIFICATION

[TITLE OF THE INVENTION] NON-ADJUSTMENT OPTICAL CONNECTOR

[ABSTRACT]

[Object] The present invention aims to provide a non-adjustment optical connector used to connect various optical elements, such as a light-emitting element, a light-receiving element, and an optical transmission line, together. The present invention is applicable to all optical modules, such as an optical connector that connects optical fibers together and a coupling module for coupling between a semiconductor laser or an optical circuit and an optical fiber, an optical printed

board in which an optical connection is required between an individual micro-optical element and an optical waveguide substrate, a hybrid optical integrated circuit, an optical arithmetic circuit, etc.

[Construction] A non-adjustment optical connector characterized by being constructed such that a projection or a hollow is automatically formed at a focal point of a lens or at a core part of an end face of an optical waveguide and is optically connected to, without adjustment, an end face of an optical fiber whose core has a hollow or a projection.

[WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:]

[Claim 1] A non-adjustment optical connector is constructed such that a projection or a hollow is automatically formed at a focal point of a lens or at a core part of an end face of an optical waveguide and is optically connected to, without adjustment, an end face of an optical fiber whose core has a hollow or a projection.

[Claim 2] A non-adjustment optical connector as set forth in Claim 1, wherein a lens substrate or the optical waveguide that is optically connected to the optical fiber is provided with a guide groove that guides the optical fiber in the vicinity of the connector.

[Claim 3] A non-adjustment optical connector as set forth in

Claim 1, wherein a lens array in which a plurality of micro-lenses are consecutively arranged in array form and an optical fiber array in which a plurality of optical fibers that are optically connected to the lens array are consecutively arranged in array form are disposed such that a projection and a hollow formed on abutting end faces thereof are caused to face each other, and these are optically connected together without adjustment.

[DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION]

[0001]

[Field of the Invention] The present invention relates to a non-adjustment optical connector used to connect various optical elements, such as a light-emitting element, a light-receiving element, and an optical transmission line, together. The field of the invention is every optical module, such as an optical connector that connects optical fibers together or a coupling module for coupling between a semiconductor laser or an optical circuit and an optical fiber, an optical printed board in which an optical connection is required between an individual micro-optical element and an optical waveguide substrate, a hybrid optical integrated circuit, an optical arithmetic circuit, etc.

[0002]

[Prior Art] Fiber optics communication has superior features, such as a large capacity and high speed, and is basic technology that supports a modern information society. Although up until now it has been chiefly introduced into a main system or a relay system of telephone lines, it is considered that it will be introduced into an optical LAN or a subscriber loop in the near future and rapidly increase the quantity of information managed. Since the number of transmission systems to be used will incommensurably increase in these next-generation optical communications, there is a need to realize mass production and low cost while maintaining high performance. The optical transmission system is constructed of a great many optical transmission circuits and optical elements, and a high-efficiency optical connection between these elements is an indispensable technique to construct the system.

[0003]

[Problems to be Solved by the Invention] However, under the present situation, in order to highly efficiently perform an optical connection especially between elements and between an optical fiber and an optical element, there is a need to precisely adjust the positions of the elements. However, this requires a great amount of manpower and man-hours, which prevents the system from being supplied in great quantities.

and at low cost. Additionally, in accordance with an increase in the quantity of information in recent years, parallel optical transmission that uses several tens of optical fibers to one hundred or more optical fibers has been put into practical use. However, since an array of optical elements must be connected together by bundling in constructing a parallel optical system, this problem increasingly becomes serious.

[0004]

[Means for Solving the Problems] The present invention relates to a non-adjustment optical connector that makes it unnecessary or simple to perform precise positional adjustment, which is required to highly efficiently perform an optical connection, and that is also applicable to a complex optical connection such as a parallel optical connection.

[0005] The non-adjustment optical connector of the present invention is a non-adjustment optical connector capable of performing an optical connection without adjustment by automatically forming a projection and a hollow having a size of several microns by light, i.e., automatically forming micro-optical connectors at a light condensing position of a lens, at a core of an optical waveguide or an optical fiber, and at a part where optical power of other micro-optical

elements is gathered and by connecting these together. However, since it is difficult to manually connect these micro-connectors by themselves, it is effective and necessary to provide a guide mechanism, such as a groove or a hole, that guides optical fibers or optical parts in the vicinity of a connector that is an optical connection position.

[0006]

[Embodiment] An embodiment of the non-adjustment optical connector of the present invention will be described with reference to the drawings. Figs. 1(A) to 1(C) show connection examples in which a connection is performed between a micro-lens 1, such as a flat plate micro-lens 1A, a convex lens 1B, or a rod lens 1C, and an optical fiber 2. As shown in Fig. 1, in the present invention, an example is shown in which a projection 3 is formed on a lens substrate 1, and a hollow 4 is formed in the optical fiber 2. The projection 3 on the lens substrate 1 or the hollow 4 is formed at a focal point, whereas the core of the optical fiber is formed so as to be recessed or projected. When the lens substrate 1 and the optical fiber 2 are connected together, light emitted from the optical fiber 2 is automatically converted into collimated light by the lens 1. As shown in Figs. 2(A) and 2(B), the optical connector of the present invention is applicable in the same way when the

lens 1 and the optical fiber 2 are provided in array form in large numbers. An example in which the lens or a lens array is provided with a guide mechanism that guides the optical fiber 2 is shown in Fig. 3. What is considered as a guide mechanism is a mechanism in which a cross-shaped groove 7 (Fig. 3(A)) or a hole 8 (Fig. 3(B)) is cut directly in the lens substrate 1 in a mechanical or chemical technique or a mechanism in which a hole 9 (Fig. 3(C)) or a groove 10 (Fig. 3(D)) is formed in a silicon substrate, etc., and is placed on the lens substrate 1. Additionally, examples of the application to a connection between the optical fibers 2 and 2 and to an optical connection between an optical waveguide and an optical fiber are shown in Fig. 4 and Fig. 5.

[0007] In Fig. 4, a projection 3 is formed on one end of an optical fiber 2A, and a hollow 4 is formed on another optical fiber 2B that is butted against the optical fiber 2A, and the optical fibers 2A and 2B are butted against each other and are connected together. Thereby, an optical connection can be achieved in a state in which the projection 3 of the one optical fiber 2A faces the hollow 4 formed at an end of the other optical fiber 2B.

[0008] Fig. 5 shows an example of a connection between an optical fiber and an optical waveguide. A plurality of cores

12 are provided in the optical waveguide 11. A guide mechanism 13 used to guide the optical fiber 2 is provided at an end of the optical waveguide 11 in the vicinity of the plurality of cores 12. A wave-shaped or rectangular groove 13A is formed at an appropriate position of the guide mechanism 13. A plurality of optical fibers 2, in an end of each of which a hollow 4 is formed, are disposed at a part of the groove 13A. The plurality of optical fibers 2 are guided by this groove 13A and are moved horizontally. The projection 3 of the core 12 of the optical waveguide 11 and the hollow 4 of the core 14 of the optical fiber 2 are butted against each other and are connected together.

[0009] A description will be given of an embodiment of a method for producing a connector between a flat plate micro-lens 1A having a cross-shaped groove 7 as a guide groove and an optical fiber 2. As shown in Figs. 6(A) and 6(B), a groove 16 is formed crossed shape to the depth of a focal plane in a back surface of a substrate 1 of the flat plate micro-lens 1A with a machine saw 15 such as a dicing saw. In this case, the intersection part of the groove 16 corresponds to a guide groove 17 of the optical fiber 2.

[0010] The projection 3 of the optical connector is made of photosensitive polyimide or photo-hardened resin. As a

forming means, the photosensitive resin is thinly applied to the bottom surface of the guide groove 17 and is exposed to coherent light that is collimated from the lens surface side of the flat plate micro-lens 1A. Thereby, only the resin at the focal point is automatically exposed, is then hardened, subjected to a processing procedure, and is formed as a projection, as shown in Figs. 7(A) to 7(C). However, the resin is required to be small in optical absorption in the wavelength range of light used for optical communications. On the other hand, the hollow of the optical fiber is formed by chemical etching based on hydrofluoric acid, etc. In the etching, it is generally known that the etching rate depends on a dopant concentration in the optical fiber. As shown in Figs. 8(A) and 8(B), only the position of the core 5 can be easily hollowed merely by soaking the optical fiber in an etching agent 19. The optical fiber 2 whose core has a hollow is inserted into a guide groove 17 produced through the above-mentioned process. In this case, the additional precise positional adjustment of the optical fiber 2 is never performed, but, in order to achieve a smooth connection between the projection 3 and the hollow 4, it is effective to give slight vibrations to the optical fiber 2. Further, as shown in Figs. 9(A), 9(B), and 9(C), the whole is fixed by hardened resin 18, etc. If a transparent

material having a refractive index near that of the flat plate micro-lens substrate 1, that of the projection 3, or that of the core 5 of the optical fiber is selected for this resin 18, optical scattering caused by small rugged parts of a surface occurring when the groove 16, the projection 3, and the hollow 4 are formed can be reduced to a negligible extent.

[0011] Although a description has been herein given of an example in which collimated light is used for resin exposure, a projection can be produced at the position of the core if use is made of light that travels through the optical fiber 2 and through the optical waveguide 11.

[0012]

[Action] An optical connection that has high accuracy and that makes complex adjustment unnecessary can be achieved by forming a micro-optical connector made up of the projection 3 and the hollow 4 at the core 5 of the optical fiber 2 or at a light-condensing position of an optical element and by connecting these together.

[0013] An optical connection between an element, such as the lens 1 or the optical waveguide 11, and the optical fiber 2 can be performed easily and with high accuracy by using the non-adjustment optical connector of the present invention. The present invention can also be applied to a parallel optical

connection. Figs. 10(A) to 10(C) show an example in which this optical connector is applied to an optical-fiber coupling connector, to a coupling module between a semiconductor laser and an optical fiber, or to an optical printed board.

[0014] Fig. 10(A) shows an example in which a non-adjustment optical connector is constructed by bonding two collimating lenses 22 together, by providing projections 3 at optical-axis positions on both side faces, and by connecting the optical fibers 2 and 2 having hollows 4 that are fitted to the projections 3 together from both sides.

[0015] Fig. 10(B) shows a state in which a projection 3 is provided at an optical-axis position on one side of a flat plate micro-lens 1A, and this is joined to an optical fiber 2 having a hollow 4 to be connected to this, and a collimating lens 22 and a semiconductor laser 23 are connected together by interposing an isolator 21 onto the other side of a condensing lens 20. Accordingly, the non-adjustment optical connector of the present invention can also be applied to a coupling module between an optical-fiber connection and a semiconductor laser.

[0016] Fig. 10(C) shows an example in which the non-adjustment optical connector of the present invention is applied to an optical printed board. A projection 3 is provided at an

emitted position of light 6 that travels through a waveguide core 12 in an optical printed board 25. The projection 3 is joined to a rod lens 24 having a hollow 4. Accordingly, emitted light is converted into collimated light and can be made incident on an optical component 26 placed on the rod lens 24. [0017] Fig. 11 shows an example in which three optical fibers are connected, showing that the present invention can be actually embodied. This figure is to evaluate a coupling loss to the optical fiber 2 obtained when collimated light is caused to be made incident on the flat plate micro-lens 1A at various angles. An excellent result was obtained, i.e., a variation in the output from each fiber 2 was 5dB or less, and an excess loss was 10dB.

[0018]

[Effects of the Invention] An industrially superior advantage resides in that an optical connection between an element, such as a lens or an optical waveguide, and an optical fiber can be performed easily and with high accuracy and can also be applied to a parallel optical connection by using a non-adjustment optical connector in which a micro-optical connector formed of a connected part of a projection and a hollow of the present invention is automatically formed at a core of an optical fiber or at a light-condensing position of

an optical element.

[BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS]

[Fig. 1] Figs. 1(A), 1(B), and 1(C) are explanatory drawings that show an embodiment in which the optical connector of the present invention is applied to a connection between a micro-optical lens, such as a flat micro-lens, a convex lens, or a rod lens, and an optical fiber.

[Fig. 2] Figs. 2(A) and 2(B) are explanatory drawings that show a connected state between a micro-lens array, such as a flat micro-lens or a convex lens, and an optical fiber array.

[Fig. 3] Figs. 3(A), 3(B), 3(C), and 3(D) are explanatory drawings that show an embodiment in which a guide mechanism that guides an optical fiber in the vicinity of the optical connector of the present invention. Figs. 3(A) and 3(B) show an example in which a groove or a hole is cut directly in a lens substrate. Figs. 3(C) and 3(D) show an example in which a silicon substrate, etc., is provided with a groove or a hole and is bonded with a lens substrate.

[Fig. 4] Fig. 4 is an explanatory drawing that shows an example in which optical fibers are connected together.

[Fig. 5] Figs. 5(A) and 5(B) are a front view and a side view, respectively, that show an example in which an optical fiber and an optical waveguide are connected together.

[Fig. 6] Fig. 6(A) is a conceptual diagram of a step to cut a cross-shaped guide groove in a back surface of a flat micro-lens substrate by use of a dicing saw (electric saw).

Fig. 6(B) is a perspective view of the groove produced above.

[Fig. 7] Fig. 7(A) is a conceptual diagram that shows an exposure method for forming a projection on a back surface of a lens substrate with a photo-hardened resin and shows a projection formed thereby. Fig. 7(B) is a longitudinal sectional view of the lens substrate. Fig. 7(C) is an enlarged photographic view of the projection.

[Fig. 8] Fig. 8(A) is a conceptual diagram in which a hollow is formed at a position of a core of an optical-fiber end face.

Fig. 8(B) is a photographic view of a fiber and a hollow of the core that have been produced.

[Fig. 9] Fig. 9(A) is a sectional view that shows a joined part of the non-adjustment optical connector of the present invention. Fig. 9(B) is a sectional view that shows a state in which the joined part is fixed with a hardening resin. Fig. 9(C) is an enlarged sectional view of the joined part of Fig. 9(A) by a microscope.

[Fig. 10] Fig. 10(A) is a conceptual diagram that shows an example of a structure of the non-adjustment optical connector of the present invention. Fig. 10(B) is a conceptual diagram

that shows another embodiment of the non-adjustment optical connector of the present invention. Fig. 10(C) is an explanatory drawing of an embodiment in which the non-adjustment optical connector of the present invention is applied to an optical printed board.

[Fig. 11] Fig. 11 is an insertion-loss-characteristic-curve view of each fiber obtained when three optical fibers are connected to the non-adjustment optical connector of the present invention.

[Description of Symbols]

- 1 Lens substrate
- 1A Flat plate micro-lens
- 1B Convex lens
- 1C Rod lens
- 2 Optical fiber
- 3 Projection
- 4 Hollow
- 5 Core
- 6 Waveguide light
- 7 Cross-shaped groove
- 8 Circular guide hole
- 9 Guide hole
- 10 V-shaped guide groove

- 11 Optical waveguide
- 12 Core
- 13 Guide mechanism
- 13A Groove
- 14 Core
- 15 Dicing saw
- 16 Groove
- 17 Cross-shaped guide groove
- 18 Photosensitive polyimide or hardening resin
- 19 Etching agent
- 20 Light-condensing lens
- 21 Isolator
- 22 Collimating lens
- 23 Semiconductor laser
- 24 Collimating lens such as rod lens
- 25 Optical printed board
- 26 Optical component

Fig.1

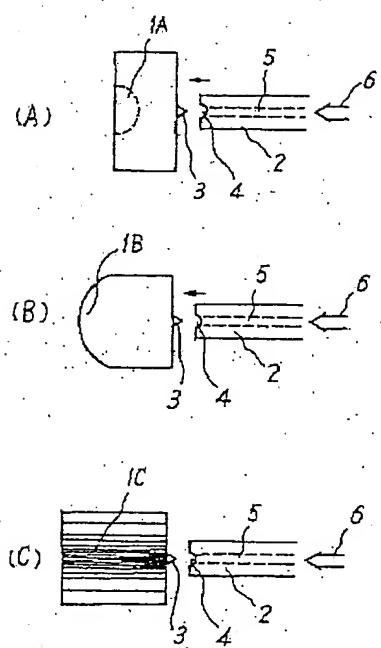


Fig.2

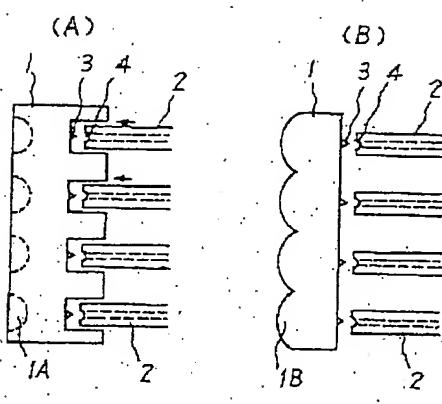


Fig.4

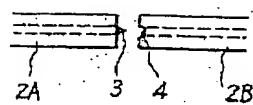


Fig.3

Fig.5

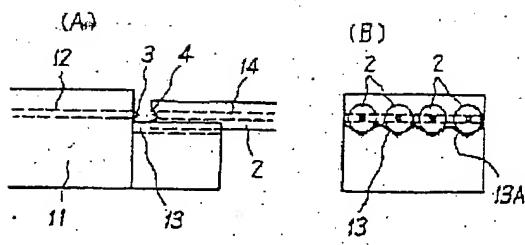
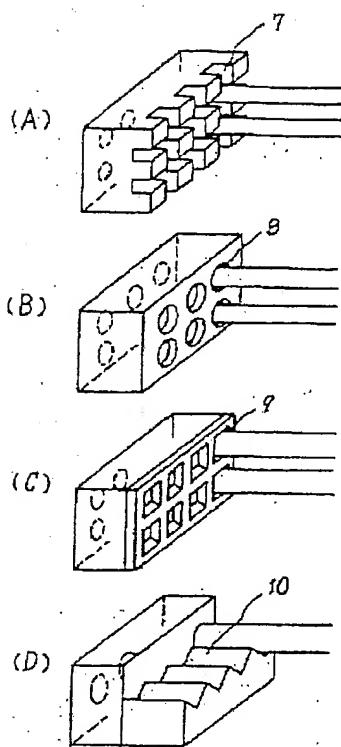


Fig.6

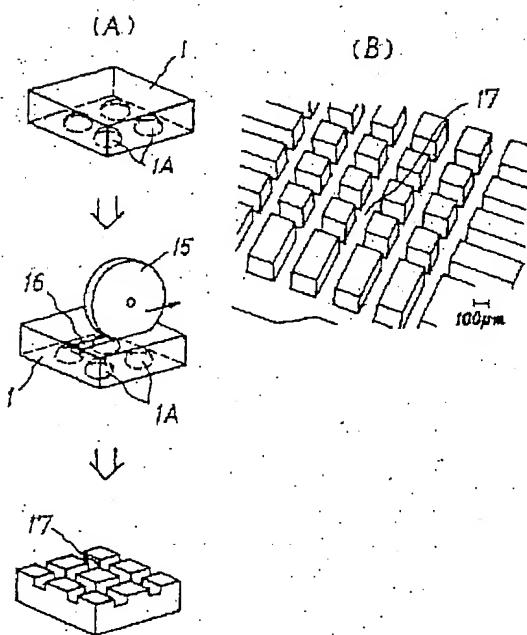


Fig.7

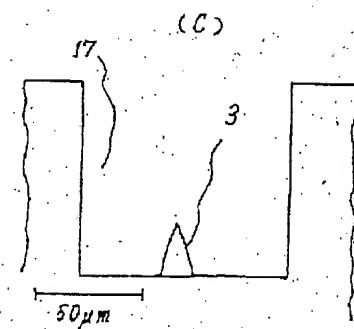
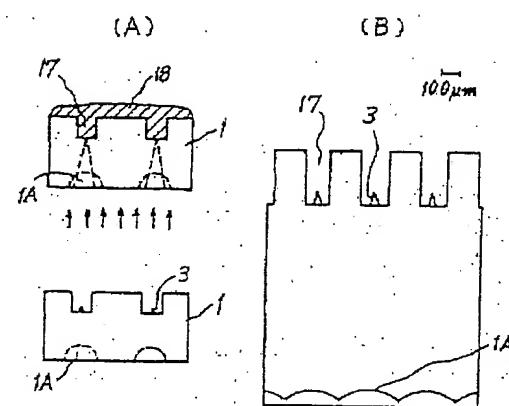


Fig.8

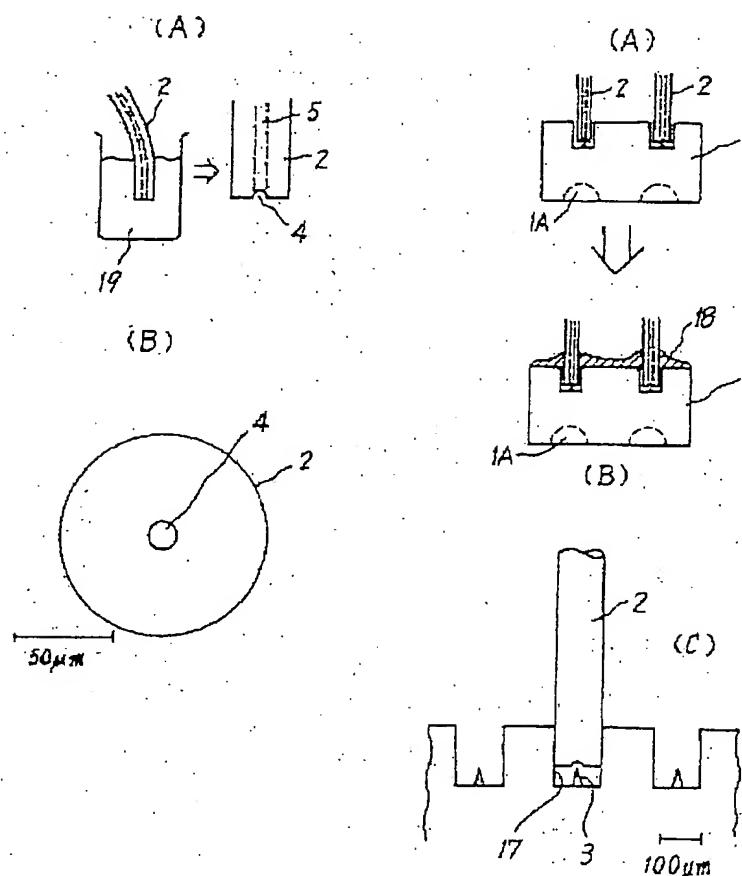


Fig.9

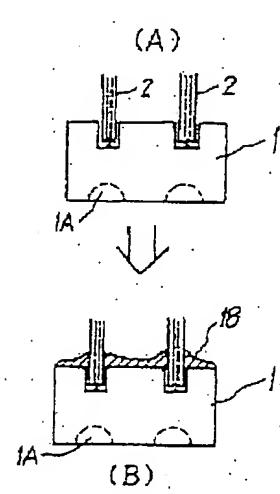


Fig.10

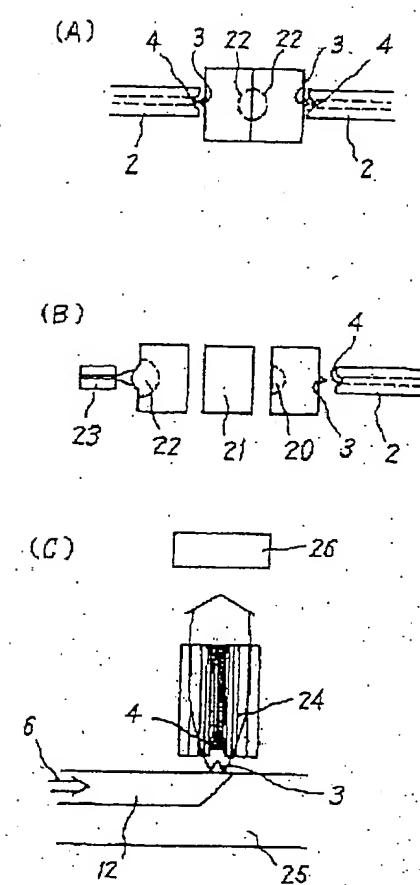


Fig. 11

